

FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO TAX INCENTIVE PROGRAM
ENTERPRISE ZONE & COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA
OPERATING PROCEDURES AND PROGRAM POLICIES

These operating procedures and program policies have been prepared in an effort to coordinate the economic development process as it relates to Enterprise Zones and Community Reinvestment Areas. Our goal is to avoid any unnecessary delays and ensure that the project moves forward.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. *Please notify Franklin County as early in the process as possible. Not only has the county appointed the director of Economic and Community Development as the lead negotiator for all EZ and CRA agreements but there are also required notifications. This is particularly important when a company is considering an intrastate relocation.*
2. *The company should complete an EZ or CRA application for tax abatement as early in the process as possible. Franklin County will not release information or begin the notification process without the consensus of all parties. But the application must be completed prior to the initiation of negotiations.*
3. *Only the minimum tax incentive necessary to bring about an investment will be considered.*
4. *Franklin County shall initiate negotiations. The team shall consist of Franklin County, a representative of the affected local government and a representative of the elected school district(s).*
5. **Notifications**
 - a. *Board of Education: Local legislative authorities entering into an agreement with eligible companies are required to notify all effected boards of education. At least 14 days prior to taking any formal action. If the exemption request exceeds the maximum allowable levels, the board(s) must be notified a minimum of forty-five business days prior to local approval. The board(s) of education must approve or disapprove the proposal by formal action and forward a copy to local government(s) requesting the action not less than 14 days prior to the scheduled local government review. In addition, the board(s) of education may waive all or part of the notice period, either in general or on a case-by-case basis.*
 - b. *Relocation: If a community is considering an intra-state relocation project, it is necessary to notify the community from which the business intends to part and the Director of ODOD. This notification must be provided thirty days prior to any local formal action. This notification must be formal.*

6. ***Tax Sharing Provision***

Local municipalities, which impose a municipal income tax, are required to enter into an income tax sharing agreement with the affected board of education on projects that create a minimum new annual payroll of \$1,000,000. If no agreement is reached within six months of finalizing the Enterprise Zone agreement, the new income tax is shared fifty-fifty (ORC).

PROGRAM POLICIES

1. The creation and retention of jobs in the Foreign Trade Zone of the Rickenbacker Port Authority is the top priority of the county. Expansion of foreign trade zones to other areas in the county with agreement of all affected parties: cities, villages, townships and school districts is encouraged.
2. Petitions for the designation of “Distressed” EZ designations are a priority. The revitalization of vacant commercial and industrial facilities is necessary for the economic health, elimination of blight and maintaining a tax base. Pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, Section 5709.61(A)(1)(d) Franklin County determines that the minimum level of prevalence of commercial or industrial structures that are vacant or demolished or vacant and tax delinquent should exceed 25% of all zone commercial or industrial structures.
3. Petitions for the designation of CRAs or “Non-Distressed” EZ designation should be based on clearly defined economic development objectives of the local government, outlined in plans and zoning codes, and adequate resources to provide infrastructure to support industrial and commercial development within the zone.
4. Local governments petitioning for “Non-Distressed” EZ or CRA should demonstrate that they have provided for opportunities for housing affordable to employees at the wage level firms locating, expanding, renovating or occupying the zone. Before the County Board of Commissioners provides agreements, the local government should demonstrate that they have provided for opportunities for housing affordable to future employees.
5. Relocations of firms from other Franklin County jurisdictions is discouraged, unless the jobs risk being lost from Franklin County.
6. Tax incentives should be greater for enterprises that are creating high wage jobs ***(Franklin County defines a high wage job as paying at least 100% of the current Franklin County median income as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development).***
7. For each zone, the county or its designee shall be the lead negotiator of a team comprised of representatives of the affected local government and school district(s).

8. ***All enterprises entering into agreement with Franklin County for tax abatement must also enter into agreement with Franklin County Department of Human Services for a "First Source Hiring Agreement".***
9. ***All Franklin County EZ and CRA agreements shall contain "claw back" and performance clauses. The claw back will provide for reimbursement of abated taxes by the enterprise should they fail to remain at that location for the life of the agreement. The performance clause limits the amount of abatement to the actual number of positions created and/or retained by the enterprise and described in the agreement.***
10. Petitions and procedures to establish CRA's and EZ's will be in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code. The Franklin County Director of Economic and Community Development will be the designated Housing Officer for the community reinvestment areas and the designated Enterprise Zone Manager (EZM) for the enterprise zones. Applications for tax incentives are obtained from the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, Director of Economic and Community Development, 373 South High Street, Columbus, OH 43215, (614) 462-5562.

Adopted October 20, 1998
Resolution No. 1011-98